Integrating the New ALA Core Competences of Librarianship into the LIS Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

The ALA Core Competences of Librarianship (ALACCs) codifies the essential skills, knowledge and abilities expected of professional librarians and allied professionals in a set of nine competencies further elaborated by a list of the specific knowledge and abilities that define that competency. ALACCs serve several purposes and audiences, among them LIS students and faculty. While the competences are meant to describe an early career professional rather than someone just graduating from an LIS program, the ALACCs certainly offer some guidance regarding some of the content and skills that should be addressed in their curricula. Indeed, while the ALACCs are not related to accreditation, ALA's accreditation standards do indicate that they expect LIS programs to be aware of and address professional standards, of which the ALACCs are one example.

The first version of the ALACCs was approved in 2009 as the 2009 ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship. A significantly revised and updated version of the ALA Core Competences of Librarianship (ALACCs) was approved by the American Library Association (ALA) Council in January 2023. The process to update the ALACCs took more than five years and involved extensive consultation with many stakeholders through webinars, a survey, emails to more than a hundred ALA leaders, as well as many other feedback sessions.

Composed of nine competence areas, this is the first iteration of the ALACCs which intentionally incorporates the concepts of social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion both throughout the competences and in a separate competence.

1. Gateway Knowledge
2. Information Resources
3. Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education
4. Management and Administration
5. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information
6. Reference and User Services
7. Research and Evidence-Based Practice
8. Social Justice
9. Technological Knowledge and Skill

Given the recently revised and approved ALACCs in January 2023, it is important for LIS faculty to review these competences and consider ways that the core competences could be incorporated into the LIS curriculum. The goal of this session is to bring together LIS faculty from across the curriculum to discuss how they are either currently incorporating the new competences into their courses or how they envision they could do this. Some of the questions that the speakers will be asked to consider include:

- Which competences align with various courses across LIS curricula?
- Which knowledge and skills areas could or should be addressed in these courses?
- What materials, activities, and assignments are faculty integrating to address these areas?
- What level of attainment do we expect students to achieve within our courses and programs?
- How might student achievement of these competences be assessed?

Confirmed speakers:

- Sandy Hirsh is the current Chair of the ALA Committee on Education. She will give a brief overview of the competences. She will serve as co-moderator for the session.
- Laura Saunders is a current Member of the ALA Committee on Education. She will give a brief overview of the process used to update the competences. She will serve as co-moderator for the session.
- Africa S. Hands has taught Foundations of Library and Information Science. She is also an advocate for lifelong learning of LIS professions and the communities they serve. She will discuss how to integrate competences *1. Gateway Knowledge* and *3. Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education* in courses.
- Kawanna M. Bright has experience as a middle manager in academic libraries and a PhD in research methods and statistics. She teaches both Research Literacy and Research Methods courses, and has taught and is the lead instructor for the Administration and Management course. She will discuss how to integrate competences *7. Research and Evidence-Based Practice* and *4. Management and Administration* in these classes.
- Athena Salaba teaches Information Organization, Resource Description, Subject Access, and International Librarianship courses and will discuss how to integrate *1. Gateway Knowledge* and *5. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information* into these classes.

- Rebecca Davis has experience working in reference and user services as a librarian and brings that experience to the classroom. She teaches the Reference course and will discuss how to integrate *6. Reference and User Services* into these classes.
- Michele Villagran is an advanced certified cultural intelligence and unconscious bias facilitator. She teaches Cultural Competence for Information Professionals and will discuss how to integrate *8. Social Justice* into these classes. Dr. Villagran will also discuss how formats / categories of information resources intersect with diverse needs of information communities related to *2. Information Resources.*
- Rachel Williams has a background in public libraries and teaches in that area as well as introductory technology courses, Database Management, and Information Visualization. She will discuss how to integrate *9. Technological Knowledge and Skill* into these classes. Dr. Williams will also address collection development in librarianship related to *2. Information Resources.*

While the panelists will come prepared to discuss their own courses, the group does not intend to approach the session as a panel of experts but rather as a community of practice. After sharing some initial thoughts about the relationship of the new core competences to the classes they teach, the speakers will engage the audience in the discussion and encourage the audience to share their own experiences. To facilitate conversation, the panel will prepare questions, which might include:

- How have you begun to incorporate the current competences, or in what ways did you address the previous set in your teaching?
- Which competences have you found easiest or most challenging to address?
- How will the new social justice competence impact teaching or instructional design?
- Have you had, or could you anticipate, any challenges with addressing the competences? If so, could we discuss as a group how we might overcome these challenges?

The moderators will capture the ideas that are shared in the session discussion and will share that out with session participants and also will submit it as a Short Communications article to be considered for publication in the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* (JELIS).

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

social justice; pedagogy; curriculum; standards; teaching faculty.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

core competences; LIS curriculum; instruction; outcomes.